

What is claimed is;

1. An electronic image-capturing apparatus comprising:  
an image-capturing element that captures an image of a  
subject and generates electronic image information;

5 a recording device that records the electronic image  
information that has been generated in a recording medium;  
a registration device that registers inherent information  
with respect to a registrant;

10 an information detection device that detects inherent  
information with respect to a user of the electronic  
image-capturing apparatus;

15 an information verification device that references the  
inherent information with respect to the user detected by said  
information detection device with the inherent information  
registered in said registration device; and

20 a control device that allows an image-capturing operation  
to be performed on the electronic image-capturing apparatus  
if it is decided by said information verification device that  
the two sets of inherent information match.

25 *Sub A* 2. An electronic image-capturing apparatus according to  
claim 1, further comprising:

25 a digital watermarking device that adds information  
related to the inherent information detected by said  
information detection device to the electronic image

information that has been generated as a digital watermark.

3. An electronic image-capturing apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising:

5 a power control device having a switch to be set at a recording position, a reproduction position or an OFF position, that controls power ON/OFF, wherein:

10 said control device allows an image-capturing operation to be performed on the electronic image-capturing apparatus without requiring said information verification device to operate as long as said switch remains at said recording position after said information verification device decides that the two sets of inherent information match when said switch is at said recording position.

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4. An image-capturing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein:

20 said registration device enables additional registration of information inherent to another registrant via said information detection device if said information verification device detects an previously registered registrant.

5. An electronic image-capturing apparatus according to claim 4, further comprising;

25 a selection device that selects a limited user mode that

limits users of the electronic image-capturing apparatus or an unlimited mode that does not impose any restrictions on users of the electronic image-capturing apparatus, wherein;

5       said control device implements control to ensure that only the registrant for whom the two sets of inherent information have been verified to match by said information verification device is allowed to operate said selection device.

10      6. An electronic image-capturing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein:

      the inherent information is registrant's fingerprint information; and

      said information detection device is constituted of a sensor that detects fingerprint information.

15      7. An electronic image-capturing apparatus according to claim 6, further comprising:

      a grip used by the user to hold the electronic image-capturing apparatus while capturing an image of a subject, 20    wherein

      said sensor is provided at a position at which a finger of the user is naturally placed when the user holds said grip.

25      8. An electronic image-capturing apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising:

a registration control device that deactivates said information verification device if it is decided that information with respect to user detected by said information detection device is not registered at all in said registration device, and registers said inherent information detected by said information detection device in said registration device.

9. An electronic image-capturing apparatus according to  
claim 8, wherein:

10 said registration control device prohibits updating of  
contents of information registered in said registration device  
if it is decided that there is at least one set of inherent  
information registered in said registration device as long as  
said information verification device does not decide that two  
15 sets of inherent information match.

10. An electronic image-capturing apparatus according to  
claim 1, wherein:

20 said control device allows a reproduction operation  
regardless of results of verification performed by said  
information verification device when the electronic image  
information recorded in said recording medium is reproduced.